

JUNE 22, 1978

ASIAN STUDIES MEETING

ANNCR: MORE THAN TWO HUNDRED AMERICAN SPECIALISTS IN ASIAN STUDIES MET IN ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA, RECENTLY, IN A REGIONAL PROGRAM OF SCHOLARLY DISCUSSION OF ASIA. WE HEAR ABOUT IT IN THIS REPORT FROM VOA CORRESPONDENT RAY KABAKER.

TEXT: THE SETTING: A BIG HOTEL ACROSS THE STREET FROM DISNEYLAND. FOR THE SCHOLARS IT WAS A THREE-DAY BREAK IN SCHOOL ROUTINES, BUSINESS IN TOURIST SURROUNDINGS.

THEY HAD COME FROM SEVERAL WESTERN STATES, AND FROM HONG KONG, TAIWAN AND INDIA, TO PARTICIPATE IN A REGIONAL MEETING "ASIAN STUDIES ON THE PACIFIC COAST." THE MEETING WAS PART OF THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION OF ASIAN STUDIES. THE PROGRAM CHAIRMAN, PROFESSOR SEYMOUR SCHEINBERG, WHO TEACHES AT THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS AT FULLERTON, CALIFORNIA TOLD VOA ABOUT THE SCOPE OF THE MEETING.

TAPE: CUT ONE-SCHEINBERG

"WE HAVE FIFTY-TWO PANELS, WITH TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY PEOPLE PARTICIPATING. WE HAVE ABOUT ONE-HUNDRED AND EIGHTY PAPERS BEING READ. IT COVERS EVERY ASPECT OF ASIA AND VIRTUALLY EVERY COUNTRY IN ASIA, DEALING WITH POLITICS, RELIGION, LINGUISTICS. IN FACT WE HAVE A COUPLE OF EXCELLENT PANELS DEALING WITH THE TEACHING OF ASIA IN THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS HERE. WE HAVE BILINGUAL EDUCATION PANELS. THIS (PROGRAM) IS GENERALLY DETERMINED REALLY BY THE PAPERS SUBMITTED TO THE PROGRAM CHAIRMAN, MYSELF, THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. AND AS THEY COME IN, I MATCH THEM UP, PUT THEM TOGETHER, FORM PANELS WITH A CHAIRMAN, THREE PAPERS AND A DISCUSSANT."

VOICE: AS PROFESSOR SCHEINBERG INDICATED, THE PAPERS AND TOPICS RANGED WIDELY, FROM TAIWAN, PAST AND PRESENT, TO RELIGION IN ASIA TO ASIAN MASS COMMUNICATIONS, CHINESE LITERATURE, LEGAL INSTITUTIONS IN ASIAN POLITICS, SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS, JAPANESE POLITICS PAST AND PRESENT, CONTEMPORARY AFFAIRS IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, CHINESE WOMEN WRITERS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PHILIPPINES. AS USUAL, SCHOLARLY FOCUS HELD MAINLY ON JAPAN AND CHINA.

TAPE: CUT TWO -- SCHEINBERG

"THAT'S BEEN PRETTY TRADITIONAL, AND OF COURSE THE CLOSER WE MOVE TO CHINA, THE MORE INVOLVED WE GET WITH IT AS A COUNTRY, THE MORE INTEREST WILL BE REFLECTED IN ACADEMIC GATHERINGS, IN SCHOLARLY GATHERINGS SUCH AS THIS. BUT ONE THING THAT HAS OCCURRED, AS I'VE SEEN IT, AT LEAST OVER THE LAST TEN YEARS, IS A TREMENDOUS INCREASE IN SOUTH ASIA INTEREST. AND, CURIOUSLY, A COUPLE OF PANELS KEEP POPPING UP EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, DEALING WITH THE HIMALAYAS, WITH THE TINY COUNTRIES OF NEPAL, SIKKIM, BHUTAN, WHICH ARE RARELY MENTIONED ANYWHERE ELSE, IN THE PRESS OR AT OTHER ORGANIZATIONS. BUT I THINK IT DOES POINT OUT AN EXPANSION OF INTEREST IN SOUT ASIA GENERALLY. AS YOU GET TO THE PERIPHERY OF THE MAIN ASIAN INTERESTS, GEOGRAPHICALLY SPEAKING, THE CLOSER TO THE CENTER INTEREST IS MORE INTENT, AND IT SPREADS OUT, AND SO IT'S PICKING UP NOW IN SOME OF THE SMALLER COUNTRIES."

VOICE: PROFESSOR SCHEINBERG SAYS THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN AN ACTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR ASIAN STUDIES ON THE WEST COAST OF THE UNITED STATES, BUT THAT STUDENT INTEREST SEEMS TO RESPOND IN CYCLES. HE SINGLES OUT INDIA AS A CURRENT EXAMPLE OF GROWING SCHOLARLY INTEREST, AND ONE OF THE LIVELIER PANELS DISCUSSIONS AT THIS MEETING CENTERED ON RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL INFLUENCES AT WORK IN THE LEADERSHIP OF MORAJI DESAI, THE DEVOUT OCTOGENARIAN HINDU WHO TOOK OVER THE REINS OF GOVERNMENT FROM INDIRA GANDHI. I ASKED PROFESSOR SCHEINBERG WHAT KIND OF AMERICAN YOUNGSTER DECIDES TO SPECIALIZE IN ASIAN STUDIES THESE DAYS.

TAPE: CUT THREE-- SCHEINBERG

"I WILL HAVE TO ADMIT THAT IT TAKES, I THINK, A SPECIAL STUDENT -- THE KID WHO IS WILLING TO PUT OUT A LITTLE BIT MORE. BUT THAN THE INDIVIDUAL WHO IS WILLING TO STUDY ROMANIAN OR RUSSIAN AND BECOME INVOLVED THERE, HE, TOO, HAS TO PUT OUT THAT MUCH MORE. I SAY 'A LITTLE BIT MORE' IN RELATIVE TERMS, BECAUSE HE (THE ASIAN STUDIES SCHOLAR) ENDS UP HAVING TO STUDY SOME RATHER STRANGE AND VERY, VERY COMPLICATED LANGUAGES THAT ARE MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO PICK UP ON AND TAKE A MUCH LONGER TIME TO MASTER. AND YOU NEED A KID WHO'S WILLING TO DEDICATE HIMSELF TO THIS. WE HAVE THEM, AND ITS VERY NICE. WE HAVE STUDENTS HERE WHO REFLECT THAT INTEREST, WHO ARE READING PAPERS, AS OCCURRED TODAY: ONE PAPER BY A GRADUATE STUDENT FROM OUR SCHOOL, PATTY SANTRY, READING SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE INDIANS IN CALIFORNIA. I MENTION THIS BECAUSE IT IS A REFLECTION OF THE DEGREE OF SCHOLARLY EXPERTISE ACQUIRED BY HER AND THE REACTIONS ON THE PART OF THE PROS (PROFESSIONALS) SITTING IN THE AUDIENCE. THESE FOR THE MOST PART ARE FACULTY, ARE PROFESSORS AND SCHOLARS, MOST OF WHOM HAVE PUBLISHED, AND THEY WERE ABSOLUTELY AMAZED. THEY WERE VERY, VERY IMPRESSED."

VOICE: COMMENTS ON A MEETING OF AMERICAN SPECIALISTS IN ASIAN STUDIES. THAT WAS PROFESSOR SEYMOUR SCHEINBERG, PROGRAM CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING, WHICH TOOK PLACE RECENTLY IN ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA.

#

JS/DL